AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A surface-modified nanoparticulate metal oxide, where the metal is chosen from the group consisting of aluminum, cerium, iron, titanium, zinc and zirconium, wherein

a) the surface modification comprises a coating with polyasparaginic acid with molecular weight M_w of from 1000 to 100 000, and

b) the metal oxide particles have an average primary particle diameter of from 5 to 10 000 nm.

2. (Previously Presented) The metal oxide according to claim 1, wherein it is surface-modified zinc oxide.

3. (Withdrawn) A method of producing a surface-modified nanoparticulate metal oxide, where the metal is chosen from the group consisting of aluminum, cerium, iron, titanium, zinc and zirconium, by

a. precipitation of the metal oxide from an aqueous solution of one of its metal salts,

b. separating off the precipitated metal oxide from the aqueous reaction mixture and

c. subsequent drying of the metal oxide,

wherein the precipitation of the metal oxide in process step a. takes place in the presence of polyasparaginic acid.

4. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 3, wherein the metal salts are metal halides, acetates, sulfates or nitrates.

5. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 3, wherein the precipitation takes place in the presence of polyasparaginic acid with a molecular weight M_w of from 1000 to

100 000.

6. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 3, wherein the precipitation takes place at a temperature in the range from 20 °C to 100 °C.

7. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 3, wherein the precipitation takes place at a pH in the range from 3 to 12.

8. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 3 for producing surface-modified nanoparticulate zinc oxide.

9. (Withdrawn – Currently Amended) The method according to claim 8, wherein the precipitation of the zinc oxide in process step a. takes place from an aqueous solution of zinc(II) chloride or zinc(II) nitrate at a temperature in the range from ~~25~~ 25 °C to 40 °C and a pH in the range from 7 to 11 in the presence of polyasparaginic acid with a molecular weight M_w of from 1000 to 7000.

10. (Withdrawn – Currently Amended) ~~The use of~~A process for producing a cosmetic preparation comprising adding the surface-modified nanoparticulate metal oxides defined according to ~~claim 1 for producing cosmetic preparations.~~claim 1 to a cosmetic formulation.

11. (Withdrawn – Currently Amended) The ~~use~~ process according to ~~claim 10 for producing~~claim 10, wherein the cosmetic preparation is a cosmetic sunscreen ~~preparations.~~preparation.

12. (Withdrawn) A cosmetic preparation comprising surface-modified nanoparticulate metal oxides defined according to claim 1.

13. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 4, wherein the precipitation takes place in the presence of polyasparaginic acid with a molecular weight M_w of from 1000 to 100 000.

14. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 4, wherein the precipitation takes place at a temperature in the range from 20 °C to 100 °C.

15. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 5, wherein the precipitation takes place at a temperature in the range from 20 °C to 100 °C.

16. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 4, wherein the precipitation takes place at a pH in the range from 3 to 12.

17. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 5, wherein the precipitation takes place at a pH in the range from 3 to 12.

18. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 6, wherein the precipitation takes place at a pH in the range from 3 to 12.

19. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 4 for producing surface-modified nanoparticulate zinc oxide.

20. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 5 for producing surface-modified nanoparticulate zinc oxide.